

Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 31 | Min 17 | Humidity 33%

Mainly Clear sky

Sensex 77,311 | Nifty 23,381 | Gold 85,613 | Silver 95,180 | Dollar 87.50 | Euro 90.27 | GBP 108.36



FEEL THE MUSIC

Artists, event organisers recall time when community music was a thing in Bengaluru, demand that busking be encouraged

PAGE 3



STOP, MOVE

After survey identifies bus stops that were hurdles to smooth movement of traffic, agencies begin task of shifting them away

PAGE 4

Govt order issued to raise daily food allowance to police officials on bandobast duty to Rs 200, but officers not hopeful it can be accessed without bureaucratic delays; quality of food is another concern

PIECEMEAL ON THEIR PLATE

Till Oct, police personnel got Rs 120, accused in custody got Rs 150

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The Karnataka Police Department issued a circular on February 4, reinforcing the provision of quality food for police personnel deployed on bandobast duty during festivals, special events, and elections. As per a government order, officers are entitled to a food allowance of Rs 200, and unit officers have been instructed to ensure its proper implementation.

The irony is that until October, police personnel received around Rs 120 as a food allowance, while the allowance for accused persons in police custody had been increased from Rs 75 to Rs 150. Following a proposal citing rising living costs and the need for better-quality food, the department finally revised the officers' allowance to Rs 200, marking the first increase in several years.

Challenges in implementation

Despite the Rs 200 food allowance being a welcome initiative, accessing it remains a challenge due to bureaucratic delays.

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“Police personnel are stationed to monitor suspicious activities, oversee VVIP events, and secure religious sites, so it is crucial that food is arranged at deployment locations to ensure uninterrupted vigilance

— Senior police official

Who will bell the loan shark?

Questions remain on which authority will be responsible for regulation of deceptive microfinance apps



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The state government has raised alarms against the growing menace of illegal microfinance apps that have become a major problem for rural and urban youth alike. However, the key question remains: Who should be responsible for regulating these deceptive platforms?

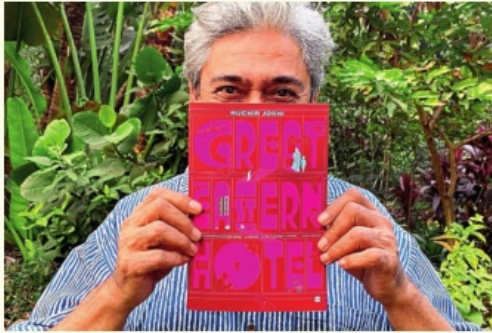
In the past, seeking loans typically meant making regular visits to banks. Now, many nationalised and rural banks offer loans through their apps, making it seem like loans are readily available at your fingertips. However, fake apps have been exploiting this convenience by offering loans with minimal documentation, leading to a rise in financial distress among unsuspecting borrowers.

Search history

A police official said, “The search history of mobile users has become a tool for these rogue loan apps to target potential customers. Initially, these apps advertise their services on social media, understanding user needs, and once an individual falls into their trap, it becomes extremely difficult to get out.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 >>

THINGS TO DO



01 Festival fever

Be part of the fourth edition of the Alliance Literary Festival celebration delving into Asia's influence on global culture, politics, economy, and art. Connect with literary enthusiasts, academicians, policymakers, diplomats, and cultural icons through thoughtful discussion and great experiences.

Where: Alliance University
When: February 13–15, 9.30 am

02 Singles' escape

This Valentine's Day indulge yourself in a high-energy celebration for singles! Enjoy live DJ beats, crafted cocktails, and a vibrant rooftop vibe with Bangalore's skyline as your backdrop. Whether solo or with friends, connect, dance, and indulge in an unforgettable night.

Where: Bang, The Ritz-Carlton.
When: February 14, 8 pm

03 Live beats



Catch Soundarya live at Windmills this Valentine's Day weekend, bringing her unique New Age Pop sound with a fusion of modern and classical influences.

Where: Windmills
When: February 14 and 15

04 Romantic bites



A melt-in-your-mouth dessert crafted with rich, dark chocolate and topped with a dusting of powdered sugar and colourful sprinkles. Indulge in the decadence of this irresistible, fudgy delight and add a little extra sweetness to your celebration!

Where: Chinita, Bangalore
When: February 14

Pollution board told to identify what is dirtying city's lakes

Review of water quality in lakes, tanks, ponds reveals unsavoury extent of pollution

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The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has yet again directed the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) to identify the source of pollution in stagnant water bodies in Bengaluru and across the state to improve water quality.

CPCB has raised the issue in a letter dated January 6, 2025, after reviewing water quality data of lakes, tanks, and ponds, submitted under the National Water Quality Monitoring (NWMP) program.

The central pollution watch-

dog has noted that water quality data of stagnant water bodies for the year 2023 for critical parameters such as dissolved oxygen, Ph, biological oxygen demand, faecal coliform, etc. requires special attention.

"Water quality data of stagnant water bodies for the year 2023 are compared with primary water quality criteria for outdoor bathing notified under the Environment Protection rule, 1986, and observed that some of the monitoring locations at lakes, tanks, and ponds

require attention. It is requested to identify sources of pollution, especially at the non-complying locations, and make concerted efforts for improvement of water quality," said the letter from CPCB, a copy of which is with BM.

Notably, the monthly water quality reports of Bengaluru lakes and tanks by the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board show that the city's water bodies are increasingly getting toxic. The number of lakes in the city with the worst water

quality (Class E) over the years has only surged and doubled in some months, even during monsoon.

City-based lake activists say that while ensuring good water quality of lakes and for wildlife and fisheries under Class-D is also one of the primary responsibilities of the State Pollution Control Board; the agency has limited it to monitoring only.

"KSPCB has limited its role to collect water samples of Lake, process and generate clinical reports, it is high time they analyse the lake water quality reports, punish the guilty and end pollution in lake water," said Raghavendra B Pachhapur, senior lead projects, ActionAid Association.

KSPCB has limited its role to collect water samples of Lake, and generate clinical reports, it is high time they analyse the reports, punish the guilty

—Raghavendra Pachhapur, ActionAid



Algae lays a green blanket all across the Halanayakanahalli Lake

Sticker on cooker: HC quashes case against legislator

The High Court has nullified legal proceedings against legislator R Akhanda Srinivas Murthy, who faced charges after pressure cooker cartons bearing his sticker were discovered in a building during the 2023 State Assembly election.

Justice M Nagaprasanna, presiding as a single judge, granted the petition filed by Murthy and TNR Rohit, dismissing the case registered under Section 171-E and 171-F of the IPC and Section

133 of the Representation of the People Act. The court observed that the allegations in the complaint did not meet the legal criteria necessary to establish the alleged offences.

The petitioner contended that the Magistrate's approval under Section 155(2) of the Cr.P.C. had not been properly considered and that the permission was sought by the Station House Officer rather than the informant. They contended that even at face value, the alleged actions

did not constitute offences under the specified sections. The prosecution maintained that it was not mandatory for the informant to directly approach the Magistrate and that the essential elements of the offences were prima facie established, justifying a trial, since the charge sheet had been filed. The court, citing the JP Nadda case, ruled that proceeding with the case in the absence of essential elements would amount to an abuse of legal process. —BMB

State govt informs court about consumer forum appointments

The state government informed the High Court on Monday about the formation of a selection committee and initiation of the appointment process for Presidents and Members across all consumer forums.

Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice M I Arun, forming a division bench, concluded the petition by VR Raghunathan who had sought directions for filling the vacancies. Additional Government Advocate

Niloufer Akbar submitted documentation confirming the establishment of a selection committee under the Rules. A notification dated July 24, 2024, showed the formation of a three-member committee headed by a sitting High Court judge.

The government representatives confirmed that the committee had already begun the appointment process. The court stated, "When the state government and the committee constituted in the process

the grievance of the petitioner would be attended to. The present petition is disposed of, observing that the process shall be completed as expeditiously as possible."

The counsel requested timelines for completion, noting that authorities had been promising to fill vacancies since June, with 30 positions currently vacant. The court said, "As the committee is constituted and is appraised with the matter, no further orders are necessary. —BMB

Let the music play

Musicians, event organisers talk of past experiences of police shutting down shows despite permits in place after Ed Sheeran's performance was cut short

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Following the interruption of renowned musician Ed Sheeran's performance on Church Street on Sunday, several musicians and bands came forward to reveal how their performances too had been shut off in the past despite them having obtained police permission. Many emphasised that playing music is not a criminal act and urged authorities to support and allow such performances.

While Sheeran took to social media stating that permission had been secured for busking, the Bengaluru police denied this, citing the absence of clearance for using a microphone, security arrangements, and police approval. However, many musicians argued that busking should be encouraged, as it fosters a direct connection between artists and the public.

Encourage busking

"Busking is a vital global art form that enriches urban spaces and provides artists with a powerful platform to hone their craft and connect with audiences.

And Bengaluru, like many cities, has a rich history of busking in iconic locations such as Cubbon Park, Church Street, and Lal Bagh, where talented musicians thrived," said Preema John, Museum Director, Indian Music Experience Museum.

“Busking adds a unique flavour and vibe to the beauty of a city. Bengaluru, as a startup and incubator city, should provide a platform for people to discover themselves through music



She recalled an instance of police action during one of the events that IME had organised. "As part of our 'Many Musics, One City' festival in December 2023, the IME organised 'Busk at Cubbon Park'.

But despite securing all necessary permissions, with the support of UnboxingBLR, and communicating with relevant authorities, our event was inexplicably disrupted by park officials on the day of the performance, forcing us to relocate the entire program.

Playing music is not a criminal act and authorities must establish clear and accessible systems for obtaining proper permissions and licences that are adhered to, and support bringing music back to our public lives," she said.

Gopal Navale, Director of Gursukool said that in 2023, music gatherings used to take place in Cubbon Park, where a vibrant community of musicians would meet frequently. "Though permissions were sought, they were often denied or musicians were asked to leave. Music should come from the heart of the people, and performing on the streets is a natural and cultural way to engage with the community.

I had been part of Freedom Jam,

where musicians celebrate freedom through music. We gathered every month, and it grew into a large movement.

However, in 2000, when I organised a performance at my farmhouse in Nelamangala with proper police permission, a lathi charge disrupted the event. Though, I managed to bring the show back, after 2008, I stopped as sponsors started pulling out," he said.

According to Navale, busking is a way for musicians to connect directly with their audience, which is gratifying for both artists and listeners. "Cities like London embrace busking, and we should promote it here as well. For many years, I used to busk at Rangasthala on MG Road.

Every Sunday, we gathered to play music, creating a beautiful space where people would stop, listen, and engage. Unfortunately, after a chain-snatching incident, the police stopped people from gathering there," he said.

Slipping away

Joel Miranda, an advertising and communication professional, shared his thoughts on the significance of busking and community music in

Bengaluru.

"Busking adds a unique flavour and vibe to the beauty of a city. Bengaluru, as a startup and incubator city, should provide a platform for people to discover themselves through music," Miranda said. Joel had a pleasant memory to share. "When we performed near the Rangoli Art Center, people would spontaneously join in, singing and dancing with us.

Some felt nostalgic, while many simply enjoyed the moment. The unfortunate part is that law enforcement often sees music and dance as something that can quickly spiral out of control."

He said it is also up to the people to embrace and enjoy music responsibly. "Community music is powerful—it engages, encourages, and brings people together. We have performed in places like Cubbon Park and Richards Park, and playing music with children created a truly special and uplifting vibe.

However, for over a year now, we have stopped. It was a beautiful experience, something that resonated deeply with people. Music has the power to connect people, and it's unfortunate to see such opportunities fading away."

Worker stabbed to death after argument

A heated argument between two workers turned fatal late last night in Akashvani Layout, Sampigehalli, when one of them was stabbed to death.

The deceased, identified as Syed Mehboob Pasha, was involved in the sand business along with a man named Raju. The accused, Khania, is currently absconding, and police have launched a manhunt to trace him.

According to reports, Raju called Mehboob around 8.45 pm for work. While at the location, an argument broke out between him and Khania, who was also engaged in loading jelly and sand into vehicles. The dispute escalated, and in the heat of the moment, Khania picked up a knife used for cutting cement bags and stabbed Mehboob before fleeing the scene.

A witness at a nearby shop alerted Mehboob's family, who rushed him to the hospital. However, he succumbed to his injuries on the way. The Sampigehalli police arrived at the scene, registered a case, and launched an operation to apprehend the accused. **BMB**

Drone attack hoax mail

A hoax mail threatening to carry out a drone attack on landing flights was sent to Kempegowda International airport on Saturday.

According to a complaint filed by an airline staff member, an email from the address Mahanteshs6899@proton.me was sent to an official ID, threatening a drone attack on incoming flights at Bengaluru, Chennai, and Kerala airports. The sender demanded a response to a letter addressed to former Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai.

Following the email, security personnel conducted a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) check and determined that it was a hoax. The police are now working to trace the source of the email, which appears to have been intended to cause panic among passengers and airline staff. A case has been registered against the unidentified sender, and further investigations are underway. **BMB**

4 injured: Man's stabbing spree shocks Indiranagar

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Indiranagar residents were left shocked after a man went on a stabbing spree, injuring four people within half an hour, February 8. Two of the victims are pani puri vendors. Three of the victims have lodged complaints with Indiranagar Police.

The police have registered a first information report (FIR) under Section 109, 352 of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023. According to the FIR, Jaswanth P was stopped by an unknown person while he was head-

ing on his scooter towards a RO plant to fetch drinking water. The unknown person, holding a knife in hand, allegedly asked Jaswanth to drop him on the way. Jaswanth did so, but the man stabbed him. Jaswanth was rushed to the hospital by the public.

According to the FIR, Deepak Kumar Varma, a pani puri vendor, was allegedly stabbed by the same accused for telling him that masala puri was out of stock. It is said the accused waited till the customers left the place and began abusing Varma and then stabbing him in the neck.

It is alleged that the same accused stabbed Tammaiah, another pani puri vendor, for asking him to scan the QR

code to pay Rs 30 after eating pani puri. It is said that the accused got angry and stabbed Tammaiah in the neck.

The Indiranagar Police Inspector said an investigation is on and special teams have been formed to nab the accused. "We are sure he will be nabbed soon," the police inspector said.

Meanwhile, Dushyant Dubey, social worker, founder - Broseph Foundation, said that Indiranagar is generally considered a very safe area so for something like this to happen is indeed very concerning and unheard of. "We are supporting one of the victims with his medical bills



and legalities and will help the others as well if they need it. We hope and believe that this criminal will be arrested soon by the Police and made an example out of, but citizens must remain cautious and vigilant until then," he said.

Puneeth, the son of Tammaiah, told BM his father has been selling pani puri for the last 20 years. "It is the first time my father has been attacked for no reason. We stay at a rented house. I am studying PUC. We borrowed money to pay the hospital bill," said Puneeth.

Mission move 'unscientific bus stops' has kicked off

BBMP, BMTC identified stops that create trouble for traffic movement, now these being shifted away

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In a bid to ease Bengaluru's worsening traffic congestion, authorities have begun relocating 52 "unscientific" bus stops that were found to obstruct traffic flow. A joint survey conducted in 2024 by the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC), and Traffic Police identified these bus stops as problematic.

Notable locations such as the Silk Board Junction bus stop (towards Banashankari) and the ITPL bus stop (towards KR Puram) are among those being shifted a few metres away from their original spots to reduce congestion and improve pedestrian movement.

This initiative is part of a larger effort by city authorities to improve road safety and traffic flow. The traffic police have resumed vehicle towing operations, focusing on 22 high-density corridors and 75 key junctions, including the Central Business District, to curb illegal parking—a major contributor to congestion. Additionally, some traffic signals have been relocated from less effective spots to areas where they are more necessary. However, signal synchronisation will take more time to implement.

Renovations of bus stands

The BBMP has also initiated plans to renovate 60 bus shelters across the city, aiming to provide modern amenities and improve commuter experience. This move addresses longstanding complaints about the lack of basic infrastructure at bus



People seen waiting at a bus stop in the city

The IRC guidelines state that bus stops should be positioned 100 to 120 mt away from junctions to prevent congestion as junctions are already crowded

—MN Shreehari, expert

stops, which often leads to buses not halting at designated points and passengers waiting on the roads.

The Traffic Engineering Cell of the BBMP is overseeing this project, which also includes the construction of four new bus bays with thermoplastic painting to enhance traffic management.

Bus stops at junctions

According to the BMTC rule book,

bus stops should not be located at junctions since these areas connect multiple routes and experience heavy pedestrian movement. Additionally, vehicle traffic at junctions is significantly high, making them unsuitable locations for bus stops.

Traffic expert Professor MN Shreehari cited the Indian Roads Congress (IRC) guidelines, which state that bus stops should be positioned 100 to 120 mt away from

junctions to prevent congestion. "Junctions are already crowded with buses, vehicles, and pedestrians, making it difficult for traffic to flow smoothly," he explained.

With 1,500 junctions across Bengaluru, many bus stops are currently placed too close to these intersections, exacerbating traffic issues. Shreehari emphasised the need for a technical survey to assess the ideal bus stop locations in a city where junctions appear every 50 metre. He stressed that while bus stop placements should consider road users and vehicles, they must also ensure convenience for passengers to avoid a decline in ridership.

HC stays environment panels' appointments

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The High Court has stayed the appointment of the Chairman and Members of the Karnataka State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (KSLEIAA) and the Karnataka State Level Expert Appraisal Committee (KSLEAC).

A Division bench comprising Justice Krishna S Dixit and Justice G Basavaraja passed an interim order on January 17 while hearing a writ petition filed by Dodda Aswathanarayana Swamy.

"Unnikrishnan M, learned counsel, accepts the notice for respondent No. 1. Learned HCGP accepts notice for respondent No. 2. Issue an emergent notice to the other respondents. The matter under the impugned notification shall not be precipitated till the next date of hearing. Whether the interim order will continue or



not will be heard and decided on the next date of hearing. Post immediately after service of notice," the High Court stated in its interim order.

Petitioner Swamy had written to the Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India, and the Principal Secretary, Department of Forest and Environment (Ecology and Environment), that he has challenged the appointments.

"In view of the interim order of the honourable High Court of Karnataka, the KSLEIAA and KSLEAC are not supposed to hold office, conduct any duties and responsibilities, hold meetings, draft minutes, or issue environmental clearances for any projects or activities," his letter read.

According to documents accessed by Bangalore Mirror, the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change had raised concerns regarding these appointments. In a letter dated December 12, 2023, Sundar Ramanathan, Scientist (E), sought clarifications from the State Government on various differences.

The letter pointed out that B Guru Prasad, appointed as Chairman of SEIAA, was not eligible as clarification is required on experience and expertise under the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006. Similarly, Lakshmikanth HM, a member of SEIAA, is also not eligible as per the required clarification regarding his

educational qualifications, as discrepancies were found between his CV and the State Government's proposal cover letter.

Mahesh AN, appointed as Chairman of SEAC, is not eligible due to concerns regarding his experience in line with the provision of EIA Notification 2006. Dr Varun Chandra Arlu, a member of SEAC, is not eligible as his experience was found to be less than the required 15 years. Additionally, several other SEAC members Ravi Kumar Yadav BV, Megharaj Yeri, and Dhruva Kumara BY were disqualified as they were currently employed with private companies, including SLR Metaliks Private Limited, Jindal Saw Limited, and MSPL Limited, respectively.

Vinod Kumar Appe, another member of SEAC, is not eligible as his experience fell short of the 15-year requirement. Dr Sangamesh Kulliyavar and Krithika Alanahalli were also deemed ineligible on similar grounds.

whatsapp
MIRROR
9591233247

Problems in your area?
Send us a picture along with specific details. And please, no phone calls or spamming

Pothole-filled roads Basavanagudi



Roads in Ward 154 are filled with potholes, making travel difficult for commuters. Residents have raised concerns, but no action has been taken, increasing the risk of accidents and inconvenience.

Broken slabs

Victoria Road



Four broken slabs near Adarsh Opus have been a safety risk for over a month. Despite complaints, BBMP has not taken action, leaving pedestrians struggling to navigate the area.

Illegal banners Kalyan Nagar



Despite a High Court order, banners continue to cover streets in Kalyan Nagar. Residents question when BBMP will act, as the unchecked hoardings create clutter and inconvenience for all.

Look to the SKIES

Day one begins with thrilling Air Display

AERO INDIA 2025

Aero India 2025 commenced with a thrilling aerial display by the Indian Air Force at Yelahanka Air Force Station. Air Chief Marshal A P Singh led the opening sortie in the indigenously developed Tejas, setting the tone for the event. The Shakti formation, featuring women pilots flying Rafale jets, highlighted their growing role in the IAF. The Surya Kiran Aerobatic Team captivated the audience with stunning formations, including a tri-colour display and a cupid's arrow.

The event also featured remarkable displays from the Indian Navy's Varun formation, the Jaguar's arrow formation, and the Sukhoi Trishul formation. HAL's Light Utility Helicopters impressed spectators with their agility, showcasing their effectiveness in high-altitude operations. These aerial performances underscored India's advancements in defence aviation and indigenous aerospace capabilities. A major highlight was the historic participation of the US F-35 (static display) and Russia's Su-57 fighter jets, marking the first time both advanced fifth-generation aircraft shared the stage at Aero India.

HJT is now Yashas

HAL has renamed its jet trainer HJT-36 as 'Yashas' after extensive upgrades to enhance spin resistance and performance. Defence Production Secretary Sanjeev Kumar highlighted that these improvements justify a new identity, reinforcing its role in modern military training. Yashas features advanced avionics, an ultra-modern cockpit, and Indian-made LRUs, improving efficiency while reducing weight and

obsolescence. Powered by a FADEC-controlled AL551 engine, it excels in Stage II pilot training, counter-insurgency, armament training, and aerobatics. Its redesigned cockpit enhances visibility and situational awareness, while capabilities like stall and spin maneuvers, 1,000 kg armament carriage, and single-point refueling make it a versatile training platform.

India-US relationship

Chargé d'Affaires Jorgan K Andrews reaffirmed defence cooperation as a key pillar of US-India ties ahead of PM Modi and President Trump's meeting. Speaking at Aero India 2025, he highlighted growing bilateral defence trade and the US commitment to security collaboration. With the US as a major exhibitor, the event promotes technology sharing, joint ventures, and industrial partnerships under the US-India Major Defence Partnership.

— BMB



State demands incentivisation for aircraft manufacturers

Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar on Monday urged Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to incentivise aircraft and helicopter manufacturers to establish production facilities in India, particularly in Karnataka. Speaking at the inauguration of Aero India 2025, Shivakumar highlighted that the state contributes 67% of India's aircraft and helicopter manufacturing for defence services and 65% of aerospace exports. Despite these significant contributions, he pointed out that India still relies on foreign imports for aircraft and helicopter manufacturing.

Shivakumar stressed the Bengaluru's role as a hub for aerospace talent and innovation, making it an ideal location for such manufacturing facilities. He called on the Defence Minister to consider offering incentives to retain this talent within India, thus preventing a brain drain. He further noted Bengaluru's strategic significance, being the only city globally with both commercial and defence airports operating from the same strip. Bengaluru is home to over 60% of India's aerospace manufacturing and defence research, with more than 150,000 people employed in the sector, cementing its status as a global leader in aviation and defence technology.

The Deputy CM also mentioned that Karnataka was a pioneer in the aerospace sector, being the first state to announce an aerospace policy in 2013. The state has established a dedicated aerospace park spanning 1,000 acres near Devanahalli and is developing aerospace and defence hubs across cities such as Bengaluru, Belagavi, Mysuru, Tumakuru, and Chamarajanagara. Additionally, Bengaluru continues to lead in drone technology and unmanned aerial systems, both of which are transforming the commercial and defence sectors.

— BMB

High Court halts BBMP's microchip plan for city's strays

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The High Court declined to halt the BBMP's Request for Proposal (RFP) on Monday regarding the procurement and implantation of microchip readers for stray dogs in Bengaluru.

The matter was scheduled for further hearing on March 20 by a division bench comprising Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice MI Arun, who instructed BBMP to respond to the petition filed by Save our Animals Charitable Trust (SOACT).

The corporation's counsel explained that Bengaluru's stray dog microchipping programme aims to prevent vaccination duplication. He stated that whilst vaccinations are ongoing, there's no system to track



which dogs have received treatment. The pilot project, following international guidelines, has successfully microchipped approximately 20,000 dogs.

The counsel clarified that this ini-

tiative focuses on vaccination tracking efficiency rather than Animal Birth Control Rules compliance.

The court was informed about the Central Government's anti-rabies initiative, targeting disease

eradication by 2025. Widespread dog vaccination with proper monitoring was presented as a crucial strategy to achieve this goal. Addressing the court's query about microchip placement, the corporation's counsel explained that it's inserted under the dog's skin, protected from weather elements. He drew a comparison with human pacemakers, noting the microchip's size is smaller than standard injection needles.

The court was notified that the tender deadline had passed without specific rule violation challenges from the petitioners. The tender includes provisions acknowledging the petition's potential impact on proceedings.

The petitioner's counsel alleged tender irregularities, suggesting financial misconduct and favouritism towards certain NGOs under investigation, requesting a temporary stay.

“Whilst vaccinations are ongoing, there's no system to track which dogs have received treatment

—BBMP's counsel

The court briefly responded with “Nothing, sorry. Relist on March 20.” The petition seeks to invalidate the RFP dated 29 February 2024, ensure corporation compliance with animal birth control rules 2023 for tender notifications, halt the street dog microchipping pilot project in Bengaluru, and impose substantial costs on the corporation. A previous similar petition by Priyadarshini S was dismissed due to unfulfilled office requirements.

After warning & fine, man who teased elephant let off

As cases of animals in sanctuaries being harassed rise, activists call for stricter action against offenders

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After a video of a man intentionally provoking and harassing a wild elephant in Bandipur Tiger Reserve was circulated widely on social media sites, Karnataka Forest Department (KFD) has arrested the person and slapped a fine of Rs 25,000.

As per KFD officials, the offender was also asked to write an apology letter.

"We have let the person go after imposing a fine of Rs 25,000 and issuing a stern warning. No case was registered as there is no such provision under the Wildlife (Protection) Act. We are acting based on an old order by PCCF of Karnataka that talks about wildlife offences such as littering in parking areas of forest reserves or sanctuaries, kindling fire, teasing wild animals, etc. The minimum fine for such offences is Rs1,000," said S Prabhakaran, Deputy Conservator of Forest and Director of Bandipur Tiger



Video of man provoking wild elephant in Bandipur Tiger Reserve went viral



People make videos of such acts to upload on social media sites and garner views. There is a need to bring in a provision of imprisonment in case of such offence

—Joseph Hoover, wildlife activist

Reserve.

The Wildlife Act currently prohibits teasing and harassment of wild animals in a zoo. As per the rule, no person shall tease, molest, injure, or feed any animal, cause disturbance to the animals by noise or otherwise, or litter the grounds in a zoo. If caught breaking this rule, a person

may face imprisonment for up to 6 months or a fine of up to Rs.2000 or both.

Indian Forest Act considers wild animals and parts as "forest produce" and an offence related to wild animals committed in reserved forests or in protected forests is an offence under that Act.

However, there is no mention of teasing or harassment.

Mostly the offences pertaining to Wild Life under the Wild Life (Protection) Act consist of illegal hunting of wild animals. In addition damaging the habitat of wild animals—especially damaging in national parks, sanctuaries, and closed areas—, trade in wild animals or parts of wild animals, harassing the animals in zoos, etc. also constitute offence.

According to wildlife conserva-

tionists and activists, incidents of wildlife teasing and harassment in forest reserves and sanctuaries have been on the rise, and provisions for stringent punishment should be made under WLPA.

"In the past, we have tried to file cases against people who tease or harass wild animals inside reserves or sanctuaries but our efforts to file a case against such individuals under WLPA have been futile. However, cases of public harassing animals in forest reserves have been increasing. People make videos of such acts to upload on social media sites and garner views. There is a need to bring in a provision of imprisonment in case of such offence," said Joseph Hoover, former State Board of Wildlife member and founder of the United Conservation Movement and Charitable Trust.

Blood centre awarded for outstanding service

Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) Blood Centre has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation for its outstanding contribution to blood transfusion services in Karnataka. The recognition was given at the National Conclave on Blood Transfusion Services, held in Kochi on February 5 and 6, by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Officials from the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and the National Blood Transfusion Council (NBTC) presented the award.

IGICH Blood Centre was nominated by the Karnataka State Blood Transfusion Council (KSBTC) for its high-quality services in providing blood to patients in need. Dr. Pradeep R, Associate Professor of Pathology & Blood Centre Officer, received the award on behalf of the institution.

Under the leadership of Dr. Sanjay KS, Director of IGICH, the blood centre has been actively conducting voluntary blood donation camps to support children admitted to the hospital. The centre collects over 5,000 units of blood annually and issues more than 14,000 units to patients.

A major focus of the blood centre is on children with thalassemia major, a genetic disorder where children require regular blood transfusions. IGICH is a recognised Thalassemia Nodal Centre, treating over 230 thalassemia patients every month. The hospital provides them with leukoreduced blood free of cost, along with iron-chelating medicines that help manage their condition. welcome," he said. **—Iffath Fathima**

BM Trippin' Tales

Consumer Connect Initiative

Hampi Utsav to be held from Feb 28-March 2

Sridhar.Vivan
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TWEETS @sridharvMIRROR

The Vijayanagar district is set to host the Hampi Utsav this month-end to 'recreate' the grandeur of the Vijayanagara Empire. Following the success of last year's event, this year's celebration aims to mirror the same magnificence. The district administration has been holding multiple meetings to ensure a flawless execution of the event, which will showcase the rich cultural heritage of the region.

Following the announcement of the event dates, four meetings have already been conducted. In Bengaluru, District In-charge Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan, Kannada and Culture Minister Shivraj Tangadgi, and Tourism Minister HK Patil led a meeting with the deputy commissioner, SP, and CEO of the Zilla Panchayat to pro-



Hampi Utsav that celebrates the grandeur of the Vijayanagara Empire will be hosted by February-end

vide directions for smooth management. Additionally, Deputy Commissioner M.S. Divakar formed a committee of district-level officials and held discussions with various organizations and local representatives to finalize the arrangements.

Stage preparations

An official said, "Preparations for the

event are progressing rapidly, with the construction of four stages planned for this year. District Commissioner has already conducted an inspection of the sites. The main stage will be set up at Gayatri Peeth, and additional stages will be placed at the Basavanna stage, the premises of the Virupaksha Swamy Temple, and the Sasivekalu Ganesha Memorial. The Hampi Utsav

this year will magnificently reflect the cultural glory of the Vijayanagara Empire."

Efforts in full swing

Sources said that with the event scheduled for early March, concerns regarding the heat have been addressed through detailed planning. The district administration has taken

necessary steps to ensure cleanliness at the venues, including the main stage and other locations. The overall preparations for the Hampi Utsav are progressing well, and the event is set to be grand. The festival will take place from February 28 to March 2, with various activities planned.

Special highlights

"This year's Hampi Utsav will continue to showcase the art, culture, and architecture of the Vijayanagara Empire to the world. The festival will feature unique activities such as Tungarati, Hampi by Night, Wrestling competitions, Mehendi and Rangoli contests, Handicraft exhibitions, Bull and Dog shows, Traditional food stalls, Fruit and Flower exhibitions, Sculpture workshops, Painting workshops, Photography contests, and numerous events for women. A special committee has been formed to oversee the arrangements," said M.S. Divakar, Deputy Commissioner, Vijayanagara.



Many of us pay attention to the foods we're putting in our bodies -- asking ourselves whether they're nutritious and healthy for us.

But have you ever stopped to ask yourself how fast this food is moving through your gut? The answer to this question is actually really important, as the speed that food moves through your digestive tract affects your health and wellbeing in many ways.

Once you've chewed up and swallowed your meal, this food begins its journey along the gastrointestinal tract -- a long and winding pathway that begins at the mouth and ends at the anus.

Along the way, it reaches specialist organs that churn and digest (stomach), absorb nutrients (small intestine) and absorb water and salts (large intestine).

The movement of food through the digestive tract is known as gut motility. This process is partly controlled by the trillions of bacteria present in our gut. The gut microbiome is extremely important as these bacteria help develop our immune system and break down food.

So, when we eat, we're not just feeding ourselves -- we're feeding the micro-helpers present in the intestine. To thank us, the bacteria produce small molecules called metabolites that boost our immune system and keep our gut moving by stimulating the intestinal nerves so they contract and move the food onwards.

Without these bacteria and their metabolites, our guts would be less able to move food through the gastrointestinal tract. This could cause a build up of ingested material, leading to constipation and discomfort.

Gut transit time

The time it takes for food to pass from one end of the gastrointestinal tract to the other is called gut transit time.

Gut transit time varies from one person to the next. Recent estimates suggest it can take somewhere between 12 and 73 hours for food to pass through the body -- with the average being around 23-24 hours.

This variation in gut transit explains some of the gut microbiome differences seen between people -- and

HOW FAST IS YOUR GUT?

Answer to this question is important to your health



consequently their gut health.

Many factors can also affect our natural gut transit time -- including genetics, diet, and our gut microbiome.

If gut transit time is long (meaning you have slow gut motility), bacteria in the large intestine produce different metabolites. This is because, just like us, the bacteria in our guts need to be fed. These bacteria enjoy fibre. But, if gut transit time is long and fibre is taking too long to reach the large intestine, these microbial inhabitants have to switch to an alternative food source. So, they turn to protein.

The switch to protein can result in the production of toxic gases leading to health problems such as bloating and inflammation.

Slow gut transit can also cause partially digested food to get stuck in the small intestine. This has additional health consequences -- such as an overgrowth of small intestinal bacteria, which can lead to symptoms such as abdominal pain, nausea and bloating.

Fast gut transit can negatively impact health, too.

There are many reasons that someone may experience fast transit time. For example, anxiety,

inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can all cause decreased transit time and even diarrhoea.

In cases of fast transit, the resulting stool is loose with high water content. This indicates that the faecal matter has not spent enough time in the intestine, preventing sufficient absorption of water and nutrients. In cases of IBD for example, this can lead to dehydration.

Testing your gut speed

Fortunately, there's a very simple at-home test you can do to check your gut motility. It's called "the sweetcorn test". And yes, it is what you're thinking.

Don't eat any sweetcorn for 7-10 days (the "wash-out" phase). Then you are ready to begin the test. Note down the date and time, and eat some sweetcorn -- a corn on the cob or a handful of corn is sufficient. Because the outer shell of the corn is indigestible, it will pass through your gastrointestinal tract with the rest of the food you've eaten and will eventually be visible in your stool.

What you'll do is keep an eye on the next few stools you pass and note down the date and time that you observe the golden treasure. It should be noted that this at-home test is not definitive -- but it does represent a measure of transit time that, on average, gives similar results to more sophisticated measures.

If you pass the corn in 12 hours or less, your gut is fast. If you don't pass it for around 48 hours or more, then your gut is slow. If you find your gut motility is on either end of the spectrum, there are fortunately things you can do to improve it.

If it's consistently fast, it's best to visit your doctor to see if there is an underlying cause. If it's a little slow -- but you don't seem to be having any additional gastrointestinal symptoms such as bloating, abdominal pain, lack of appetite or nausea -- eat more fruit and veg to increase the fibre you're feeding those friendly gut bacteria, drink more water and exercise.

Following a balanced diet will help to keep your bowels moving and healthy.

(By Nick Iliott, The Oxford Centre for Microbiome Studies, University of Oxford, The Conversation)

MIND, BODY & HEART



All you need to know about...

Irritation triggers for moms

What kids do

Never-Ending Mess: No matter how many times they clean, toys, clothes, and crumbs, they seem to magically reappear everywhere!

Selective Hearing: Kids somehow don't hear when they are asked to study, cut down their screen time, clean up the mess but have supersonic hearing when a snack wrapper crinkles.

Ignoring Mom Until She Sits Down: No one needs anything... until she finally gets a chance to relax for a second. Most of the time a hot cup of coffee eventually becomes a cold coffee!

Whining Over The Smallest Things: The drama over getting the wrong outfit, or peeling the banana on the wrong side can feel like a full-blown crisis.

Superpower To Find Anything: "Mom, where's my..." followed by her finding it exactly where she said it was, is a daily struggle.

What partners do

The "I'll Do It Later"

Excuse: Whether it's taking out the trash or fixing something, "later" somehow never comes.

Sleeping Through The Nighttime Chaos: Kids wake up, cry, and need soothing -- yet somehow, dads remain blissfully unaware until morning.

They Can't Hear The Kids: Selective hearing seems to apply to both kids and partners when responsibilities arise.

Expecting A medal For Basic Tasks: "I changed a diaper today" or "I made dinner tonight" shouldn't be considered extraordinary achievements. Most importantly, knowing the difference between babysitting and parenting.

Making Mom The Default Parent: School calls? Ask mom. Doctor appointments? Mom's handling it. Refill diapers and kid's needs? Mom, of course.

Offering Help... Only If Asked: Moms don't want to ask for help. They want partners who notice what needs to be done and just do it.

—Femina

MIRRORLIGHTS

Clot-busting meds can boost stroke patients' recovery by over 50 pc: Study

A team of Chinese researchers has found that clot-dissolving medication -- alteplase -- can be key to improving stroke patients' recovery by more than 50 per cent.

The team from Zhejiang University, presenting the research at the American Stroke Association's recent International Stroke Conference 2025, held in Los Angeles, US, reported that the medicine is effective when given up to 24 hours after the beginning of an ischemic stroke.

The golden hour for patients with stroke, which occurs when

poor blood flow to a part of the brain causes cell death, is the first 60 minutes after symptoms begin, during which treatment is most effective. Till now the known window for effective treatment was up to 4.5 hours for some patients.

The study results show promise to patients suffering from stroke worldwide, who may not be able to access clot-dissolving medications within the time period, said Min Lou, Professor at the Second Affiliated Hospital of Zhejiang University's School of Medicine in China.

Their study was based on 372 stroke patients whose symptoms began 4.5 hours to 24 hours earlier. The participants were randomly split into two groups. While one group received the clot-busting medication alteplase, others were prescribed standard stroke care of antiplatelet therapy.

About 40 per cent of participants treated with alteplase showed little to no disability after 90 days. Conversely, only 26 per cent of those who received standard care had no disability. The findings show a 54 per cent higher

chance of functional recovery with alteplase.

However, the risk of brain bleeding was higher among those who received alteplase than among participants who did not (3.8 per cent vs. 0.5 per cent), but researchers believe this is a manageable risk.

Calling for more research, Lou explained that the findings must be applied to other groups of people, especially in areas with different stroke risks and health care resources to understand the efficacy and safety of alteplase and other such medicines.

—IANS

Lack of oversight results in poor quality food to cops

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

According to sources, bulk bills submitted for approval often face objections over technical queries, leading to prolonged reimbursements. One major hurdle is the requirement for GST invoices, which is difficult to fulfil in rural areas where many local vendors do not provide them.

Earlier, the food allowance was around Rs 120 and even lower in previous years at Rs 60-70. And, despite the increase of rates, concerns over food quality persist.

In many cases, food is sourced from external vendors, with payments made directly to them. Some officers believe that providing the amount in advance could streamline the process and reduce delays caused by outdated approval systems. But, a senior official emphasised that providing officers with an advance allowance for meals could lead to personnel leaving their posts in search of food, disrupting security operations. "Police are stationed to monitor activities, oversee VVIP events, and secure religious sites, so it is crucial that food is arranged at deployment

Insect in food: Case against caterer at air show

The Yelahanka police have registered an FIR against a private caterer for supplying substandard food to security personnel deployed at the Aero Show. The issue came to light after officers found insects in their food packets and raised complaints. Earlier, a cockroach was reportedly found in one of the meals.

To address the complaints, senior police officials visited the venue and had breakfast with the security personnel to assess the food quality. But, by Monday afternoon, new complaints emerged, with personnel again discovering insects in the food. Following the FIR, authorities canceled the caterer's work order. Officials are now considering approaching ISKCON to take over food supply for the personnel, ensuring better hygiene and quality. **BMB**

locations to ensure uninterrupted vigilance," the official stated. To address this, police stations allocate "food feeding charges" for requisitioned staff, ensuring that officers receive meals. As per this, Rs 200 is allotted per officer per day, with Rs 60 designated for each meal.

Quality of food

In big operations, the responsibility of arranging food often falls on the station head, who delegates the task to vendors. This lack of oversight has sometimes resulted in poor-quality meals. During the recent Bengaluru Bandh, a traffic police officer found a dead rat in a food packet supplied to personnel. Around 180 packets were distributed, but the officer's alert prevented consumption. The hotel responsible was sealed, and a criminal case was registered.

In urban areas, for major deployments, higher authorities, depending upon the scale of the deployment, are the sanctioning authority and approvals depend on the number of personnel involved. Vendors often provide food on credit, as bill payments from the department can take months.

Stay on ED summons to CM's wife, Minister extended

The Karnataka High Court has extended the stay on two separate ED summons until February 20, concerning Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's wife BM Parvathi and Urban Development Minister BS Suresha regarding the MUDA land allotment case.

The high court's single-judge bench postponed the hearings challenging ED notices issued last month. These notices were related to a money laundering investigation concerning 14 housing sites allocated by MUDA to Siddaramaiah's wife in 2021.

The court had initially stayed the ED notices on January 27. While adjourning both cases, the court allowed the ED one week to submit objections to the petitions. During the proceedings, Parvathi's senior counsel contended that no proceeds of crime existed under PMLA in the MUDA land allotments, as the disputed housing sites had been returned. The counsel questioned the ED's authority to conduct a parallel investigation alongside the Karnataka Lokayukta police within two days of the predicate offence FIR.

The court was informed that the ED's case against Parvathi was untenable, given that another bench had nullified proceedings against former MUDA chairman D B Natesh on January 27. Natesh had approved the 14 housing sites for Parvathi in 2021.

Parvathi's petition sought to nullify the investigation "in BGZO/25/2024



registered by ED arising out of predicate offence in Cr.No.11/2024, registered by the Lokayukta police" and to "quash the summons issued under section 50 of PMLA dated 03.01.2025 and summons dated 24.01.2025" whilst halting ongoing investigations.

In the Lokayukta police's corruption case from September 2024, Parvathi is listed as the second accused regarding 14 housing sites allocated by MUDA in exchange for 3.16 acres of land from her brother. She subsequently returned these sites to MUDA.

The ED has attached 142 properties valued at Rs 300 crore whilst investigating MUDA's housing site allocation irregularities. The chief minister's family properties remain unattached. RTI activist Snehmayi Krishna (pic)'s allegations brought these irregularities to light. The High Court had previously stayed ED proceedings on January 27 due to a petition requesting a CBI investigation into MUDA allotments. This plea for a CBI probe was dismissed on February 7. **BMB**

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CHANGE OF NAME

I Afeefah M J / Afeefah Jamaludheen W/O, Adrian Jesicain King R/o 20712, Tower 2, Nikoo Homes 1, Bhartiya City, Thanisandra Main Road, Bangalore - 560064 have changed my name to Afeefah Mohamed Jamaludheen

I, Kopal Verma W/o Jahangir Mondal R/o 2041 Prestige Sunrise Park Birchwood Apt, Neotown Rd, Gollahalli, ECity Phase 1, B'lore-560100 have changed my name to Kopal Jahangir Mondal.

I, Shivakumaraswamy C S R/o # 3, 6th Cross, 2nd Main, Bahubalinagar, Jalahalli, Bengaluru - 560013 have changed my minor son's name from Jayanth C S to Dushyanth C S.

I, SHAHINA NASREEN w/o Sabdar Pasha R/a No #16, 1st Cross, G Street, Padarayana pura Bangalore-560026. I have changed my name to NASREEN TAJ. vide Affidavit dated on 08/02/2025. Sworn Before Notary Leela Bangalore

I, Gururaj S/o Subbarao Badri R/o Flat.002, I-block, Mantra Aplyne, Dr.vishnuvardhan road, Bsk 5th stage, Bengaluru 560061 have changed my name to Gururaj Badri Affidavit Dt.10/02/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Pavithra R/a #476, Meghadhama, 1st Block BDA layout, 2nd Cross, JP Nagar 8th phase, Sarathy Nagar, Bangalore-560078. Have Changed to Pavithra G P. Afft Dt: 10.02.2025. Sworn Before Notary: Devaraju. E.

I, Muddappa R/a #476, Meghadhama, 1st Block BDA layout, 2nd Cross, Sarathy Nagar, JP Nagar 8th phase, Bangalore-560078. Have Changed to Muddegowda. Afft Dt:10.02.2025. Sworn Before Notary: Devaraju. E.

I, Geetha.G.R W/o Megharaj T R/O No 2292, 8th Cross, 8th Block,Sir M V Layout, Muddinapalya, B'luru 560091 have changed my name to Geetha.T For All Purposes.

CHANGE OF NAME

I, K.Ramprasad R/o No.376, behind Kapali Timber, KRS Agrahara, Kunigal Town, Tumkur District, Karnataka. I have changed my name from Ramaprasad to K.Ramprasad vide affidavit sworn before advocate & notary B.R.Narayana Gowda dated 07.02.2025.

I Jyoti Chouhan D/O Narendra Pratap R/O Haraluru, Bangalore have changed my name to Jyoti Chauhan and Date of Birth (20/09/1995) to (20/07/1995) for all future purposes as per my Education documents.

I Ankush Chouhan S/O Narendra Pratap R/O Haraluru, Bangalore have changed my name from Ankush Chouhan to Ankush Chauhan for all future purposes.

I, Seema W/o Moula R/a No #300/1, IDGA Mohalla, DJ Halli, Bangaragiri Nagar, Bangalore-560045. That My Daughter Name earlier was AHANA. I have changed my Daughter name as FILZA HORAIN. Vide Affidavit dated on 04/02/2025. Sworn Before Notary Leela Bengaluru.

I, Mamatha Anil Kumar, W/o. Anil Kumar, R/o. #13, 2nd Main, 1st Cross, Hongasandra, Begur Road, Blr-68, have changed my name to MAMATHA MUDDENAHALLI NINGARAJA GOWDA vide affidavit Dtd: 10/02/25 before Notary M. Rajendra, B'lore.

I, Sandeep Singh R/o Flat. C-306, Sipani Royal Heritage, Iggalur, Bengaluru rural 560099 have changed my minor son name from Saharsh Singh to Saharsh Singh Rajput Affidavit Dt.10/02/2025 notary Harisha G, B'luru

I Abhishek S/o, Shekhappa Kundagol R/o #31, Door No.202, Balaji Elite Apartment, Balaji Enclave, Doddanekkundi, Bengaluru-560037 have changed my name to Abhishek Kundagol for all purposes.



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I Y ANUSHA (Old Name), D/O Y MALLIKARJUNA, residing at No.001 Sai Homes,Kalkere Main road, Venkateshwara Layout, Horamavu, Bengaluru-560043, changed my name from Y ANUSHA to KHUSHI R vide affidavit dated 10-2-2025 sworn before notary Y.R.CHANDRASEKAR. Henceforth, I shall be known as KHUSHI R for all purposes

I, Mahesh Mahadevappa S/o Mahadevan Chinnaswamy R/o No.16, Sri residency 302, Ramaiyengar road, v v Puram, Bengaluru 560004 have changed my name to Mahesh Mahadevan Affidavit Dt.10/02/2025 Notary Harisha G, B'luru

I, Anil Pralhad Kuber R/o 1302, Tower-1, Purva Skydale, Silver County road, opp Haralur lake, Kudlu, Bengaluru 560068 have changed my minor daughter name from Aditi Anil Kuber to Aditi Kuber Affidavit Dt.10/02/2025 notary Ganesh Gowda MV, B'luru

I, MUNEER AHAMED MOHAMED HAFEZ resident At No 9, G-Floor, 2nd Cross, Near Jain Heritage School, Vyananda Layout, Kempapura, Hebbal, Bengaluru- 560024 have changed my name to MUNEER AHMED MOHAMMED HAFEZ vide affidavit dated 18.01.2025 sworn before D. Sarala Kumari, Bengaluru.

I, Harshat Krishnanand Dhanayat S/o Krishnananda Dhanayat R/o A 304 #8, Krishnasiri Residency Block A, old no 1380/11/2 Subbaiah Garden, Varthur, Bengaluru - 87 have changed my name to Harshat Krishnananda Dhanayat for all purposes

Waqf Board authority

The High Court bench headed by Chief Justice NV Anjaria and Justice MI Arun on Monday expressed concern and questioned the Waqf Board's authority to issue marriage and divorce certificates to couples belonging to the Muslim community.

The bench made the observation while looking into the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) petition filed by one Alam

Pasha to quash the government order authorising the Waqf and Haj Department of the State government empowering Waqf Boards in Karnataka to issue marriage and divorce certificates.

The matter has been adjourned to February 19 granting the time for the Congress-led government to respond to the petition challenging the government order. **IANIS**

Lethal loan-some road

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Interest rates

According to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), personal loans should come with an interest rate of between 10% to 16%, with clear rules for repayment. However, many of these apps demand interest rates of 24% or more, with some apps charging as high as 40%. Borrowers often ignore these rates in desperate times and take loans with daily interest rates of 30% to 40%, eventually falling into the clutches of these predatory practices.

Pathway to suicide

Source said that RBI has officially recognised only over 400 apps, but more than 1,000 loan apps are circulating online, making it nearly impossible to distinguish legitimate ones from fraudulent ones.

These fake apps primarily target youth and middle-aged individuals, offering loans based solely on Aadhaar and PAN card details. Many youths, in pursuit of a lavish lifestyle, end up

trapped in these loan schemes. There have been instances where individuals have taken their own lives due to the overwhelming debt caused by these apps.

Blackmail

A police official said, "When borrowing through online apps, individuals unknowingly grant these apps access to all their mobile data. Some apps disburse loans as low as ₹5,000 but demand repayment of ₹8,000 within a week. If the borrower fails, the apps threaten to ruin their reputation, sometimes morphing their photos and releasing them on social media to further intimidate them into paying."

Dangers of online loans

Chandrashekar, a bank employee said, "Taking loans online can be highly dangerous, as unauthorised apps may misuse your personal information for illicit activities. It is always advisable to borrow money only through RBI-authorised apps or official bank apps to avoid falling victim to such scams."



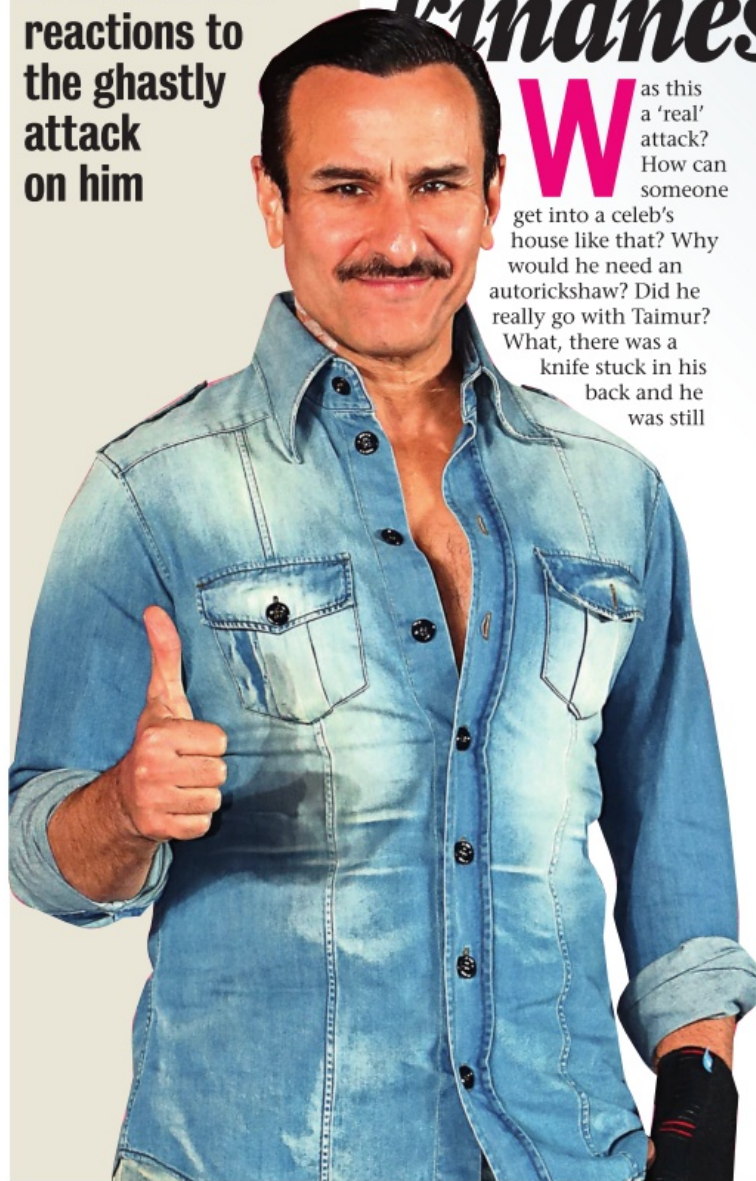
Justin Bieber shuts divorce rumours
Singer Justin Bieber has put to rest swirling rumours about his marriage to model Hailey Bieber with a heartfelt Instagram post that showcases the couple enjoying a cosy dinner date together

INTERVIEW



SAIF ALI KHAN, ACTOR

Saif reveals his thoughts to ETimes about reactions to the ghastly attack on him



There is so much kindness in the world

Was this a 'real' attack? How can someone get into a celeb's house like that? Why would he need an autorickshaw? Did he really go with Taimur? What, there was a knife stuck in his back and he was still

coherent? Saif Ali Khan got support and sympathy, for sure, but as often happens with him, he got more than his fair share of questions and scrutiny even after fighting an intruder, getting stabbed, and undergoing extensive surgery. In his first interview after the attack to ETimes, Saif thanked his wellwishers and also answered the cynics, in his trademark style – with a straight bat.

The commentary
There has been some degree of chatter about how come nobody drives? Why did it take him two hours to reach the hospital?

Yes, the question was what was he doing for 1.5 hours with a knife in his back? Absolutely not. I went downstairs and out. The first rickshaw was me going to a hospital, and then these guys went to Karisma's house. There was no lag.

And people on social media asking – arey, such rich people, no driver at home at night?

Nobody stays here all night. Everyone has a home to go to. We have some people staying in the house, but not the drivers. Unless you are going out at night or there's something needed, then you tell them to stay on. I would have driven if I could have found the keys. Luckily, I didn't. I probably should not have wiggled my back much. I'd have driven. I was completely lucid.

And you could not have just called the driver at 3am?

But he could have taken time to come, na? I knew I had to go to the hospital pretty soon.

'Was he acting?' 'Garbage' – Any responses for this sort of language being used after the attack?

I think it is expected that there will be all kinds of reactions to something like this. There will be people ridiculing it. There will be people not believing it, people making fun of it. And I think that's fine because it is what gives colour to the world. If everyone had a sympathetic reaction to something, it would be flat and dull. And I expected it, then there is no need to react to it. And the thing that became clear to me is that there is so much kindness also in the world. There's so many wonderful people who know how to make you feel better by saying supportive things. From the ward boys and the doctors to the rickshaw driver, they were all just angels, heaven-sent. There is a lot of kindness in the world and a fair amount of stupidity also. But that's what makes it interesting.

—ETimes

Scan this QR code to read the whole interview



Rakul's best friend

Actress Rakul Preet Singh has a new best friend and it is not a person. Rakul took to her Instagram, where she shared a "Get Ready With Me" video. In the clip, the actress is seen getting her hair and make-up done. She then asks for a waterbag and said: "Waterbag my best friend



these days."

The actress, who is married to producer-actor Jackky Bhagnani, talked about the "lovely combination" of the Sindhi Koki and tea.

Later in the video, the actress was seen telling her team that they have just "7 minutes" to doll her up for the event she was going for.

She then asks her make-up artist to see how she's doing her mascara, who without seeing says "perfect". She is gearing up for the release of the romantic-comedy film "Mere Husband Ki Biwi", which also stars Arjun Kapoor and Bhumi Pednekar. The film is about a Delhi professional, who navigates through a complicated love triangle when his old flame returns to his life just as he begins falling for someone new, leading to a series of comedic misunderstandings.

The makers on February 6 unveiled the track titled "Gori Hai Kalaiyan" scored by the composer duo, Akshay and IP.

—IANS

Vicky, Rashmika on promotional tour



Vicky Kaushal and Rashmika Mandanna have been making stops all across the country to promote their forthcoming historical action drama, "Chhaava". Recently, these two landed in Amritsar as part of the film's promotional tour.

Rashmika Mandanna took to the stories section of her IG and dropped a picture where she can be seen posing with her co-star Vicky Kaushal in the backdrop of an aircraft. "Amritsar... Ki Haal

aaaa!!!". The 'Animal' actress looked her usual breezy self in a cream T-shirt, along with baggy blue denim. Accompanying her, Vicky Kaushal opted for a black sweatshirt and black sweatpants, paired with a matching sports cap.

Meanwhile, Vicky Kaushal also shared a similar post on his Insta. Prior to this, Vicky Kaushal promoted "Chhaava" in Patna. During his visit, the 'Masaan' actor even relished their beloved dish, Litti Chokha. He shared photos on his Instagram. —IANS



SANDALWOOD SHOTS

Y MAHESWARA REDDY

Going places

BV Bhaskar, an upcoming actor in Sandalwood, is excited about the opportunity to share screen space with Mohanlal in Vrushabha, a pan-India movie.



Ekta Kapoor is bankrolling the movie while Nanda Kishore is helming it.

"Sharing screen space with Mohanlal is a dream for every actor. I consider it as a learning opportunity of a lifetime," said Bhaskar.

Bhaskar said he was happy to know Nanda Kishore is the director for Vrushabha. "He asked me to play a psychiatrist in the movie. I attended shooting for six days in Mumbai. I will never forget the experience of facing the camera with Mohanlal sir," he said.

He has acted in around 10 Kannada movies till date. "My previous movie was Salaga in October 2021 for which I thank director Vijay as it gave me a chance to share the screen with Daali Dhananjay," he said.

He is one of the important players of Karnataka Bulldozers team that participated in Celebrity Cricket League (CCL).

Peculiar title

There is no shortage of Kannada movies with innovative and funny titles. Now, the movie Interval is joining the list of such movies.

Roaring Star Srimurali unveiled one song and the title of the movie recently. "I congratulate the director for ensuring all the elements in the movie that are needed to draw young audiences to the theaters. The title of the movie – Interval – is quite interesting. The quality of the song and the trailer is good," said Srimurali.

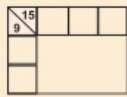
Director Bharath Varsha said the movie shooting was wrapped up recently. "We plan to release the movie on March 7. It is the story of three boys and two girls who come to Bengaluru from rural areas," said Varsha.

Bharath Varsha is also bankrolling it under the Bharatvarsha Pictures banner. "Interval conveys a message to society, especially youth, on the importance of an interval (pause) from their routine. Most of the actors are newcomers. I organised a 15-day workshop for the actors. All of them have a theater background. The climax of the movie is very interesting," the director said.



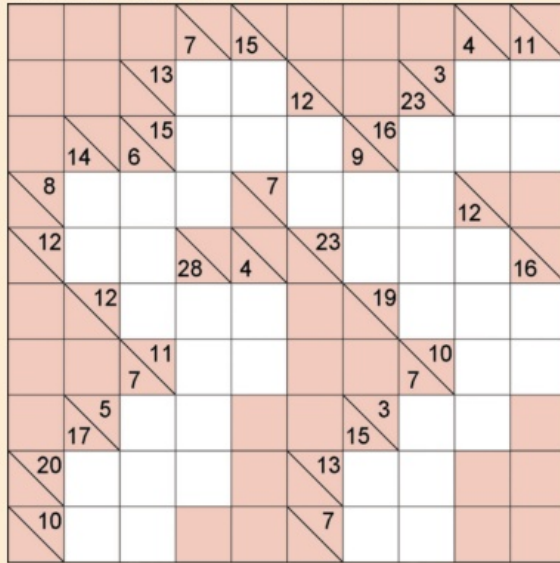
Kakuro

The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas

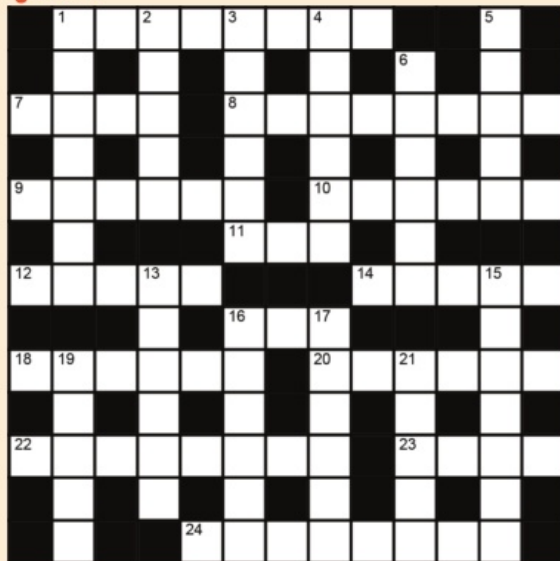


for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.

Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

- 1 New York theatreland (8)
- 7 Clue or tip (4)
- 8 Shouts of derision (8)
- 9 Dozed or slept lightly for a short time (6)
- 10 Ill-advised (6)
- 11 Some people play an instrument by this (3)
- 12 Abominable snowmen (5)
- 14 Photographs (5)
- 16 Tea (3)
- 18 Papal representative (6)
- 20 Light wind (6)
- 22 Speaks haltingly (8)
- 23 Skilfully (4)
- 24 Incredible (8)

DOWN

- 1 Turn "a bridge" around to get a popular road (7)
- 2 Readily available (2,3)
- 3 1991 to 2000 A.D. for example? (6)
- 4 Excalibur wielder (6)
- 5 Respiratory symptoms (5)
- 6 Famous naturalist (6)
- 13 Urge on (6)
- 15 Conundrums, enigmas or riddles (7)
- 16 Arrive at; recover consciousness (4,2)
- 17 Mistreated (6)
- 19 Extremist (5)
- 21 Muse for the poets? (5)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: G EQUALS H
 EQHXXHJ LX GH RGI GNX BIZOJ
 GLX RIMP; QHD GLS NXP OI
 IDGHM EQHXXHJOHXX.



Linemaro

Do you have a pencil? I want to erase your past and write our future



Mindchow

When work is a pleasure, life is a joy. When work is a duty, life is slavery



Joke of the day

I don't believe in astrology. But then I'm an Aquarius, and Aquarians don't believe in astrology

Loop

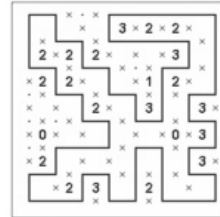
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

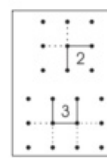
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) - Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

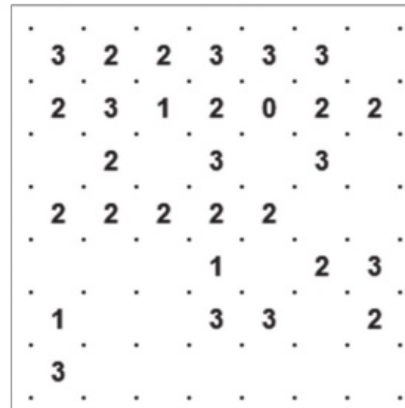
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



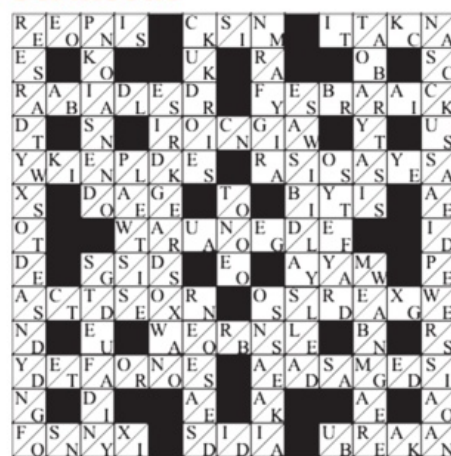
(Fig A)



(Fig B)
Not Allowed



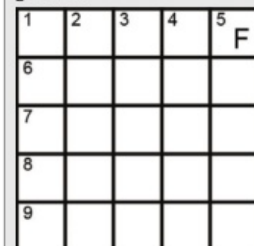
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

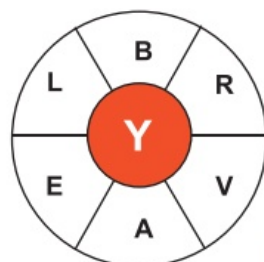
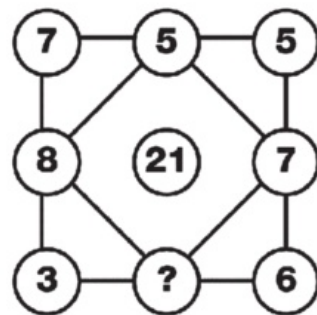
- 1 FU FAQ; 6 In due;
- 7 Ombre; 8 Be Ill;
- 9 Spare

DOWN

- 1 Lab IQ; 2 PI Run;
- 3 Abode; 4 Femur;
- 5 Flees

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye

How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

13 Average; 15 Good; 17 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge



To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.



Hocusfocus



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Bench is different. 2. Puddle is smaller. 3. Glove is different. 4. Shirt is shorter. 5. Scoreboard is larger. 6. Neckline is different.

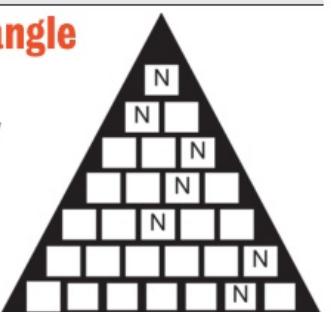
Riddler

If you and a friend have the same amount of apples, how many does she need to give you in order to have 10 more apples than her?

Alpha triangle

- 1 One of the poles
- 2 Nah
- 3 Male child
- 4 A tune or a melody
- 5 Has a yearning
- 6 Motto
- 7 Large bulging

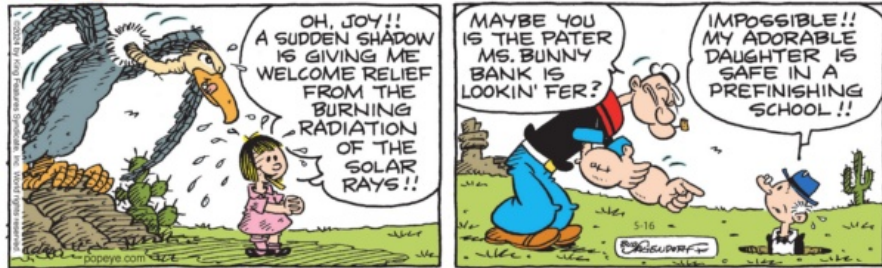
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be



made at each step answering to the clue given.

COMICS

Popeye



Bizarrotrip



Diamond Lil



Hart of the city



Crankshaft



Mutts



WHAT YOUR STARS SAY TODAY

Aries Mar 21 - Apr 20

The Moon's blessings bring stability and focus to your work. Your decision-making skills will be strong, helping you navigate professional challenges. Past investments may yield profits, improving your savings. However, avoid speculation to maintain financial security.



Leo Jul 24 - Aug 23

With inner strength and positivity, you will enjoy work and romantic moments with your spouse, enhancing domestic harmony. New ideas in the family business may bring success, and job seekers may find good opportunities. Lovebirds should avoid unnecessary arguments.



Sagittarius Nov 23 - Dec 22

With positive lunar energy, destiny is on your side. A visit to a religious place or charitable donation may bring inner peace. Property deals and work-related overseas travel may materialise. Plans for higher education may also take shape. Stay hydrated to avoid kidney-related issues.



Taurus Apr 21 - May 20

You may feel low and dissatisfied today. Arrogance could impact both your personal and professional life. A lack of confidence may hinder creativity at work. Try to stay positive and focus on self-improvement.



Virgo Aug 24 - Sep 23

A dull mood and feelings of disappointment may arise. Control your arrogance, as harsh words could lead to losses. Lovebirds should be mindful of their conversations, as unnecessary disputes may strain relationships.



Capricorn Dec 23 - Jan 20

Negative lunar influence may lead to challenges, including potential conspiracies. Avoid conflicts and arguments at home. Refrain from reckless driving or risky adventures. Those in research, occult sciences, and geology may excel in their fields.



Gemini May 21 - Jun 21

A surge of energy will help you perform efficiently at work. Hard work will start paying off, boosting your confidence. Property disputes with siblings may be resolved, and networking with influential people may benefit your career. Relationship conflicts may also find resolution.



Libra Sep 24 - Oct 22

Peace of mind prevails today. You may consider investing in your business, improving liquidity. Increased earnings will strengthen your finances. Romantic moments with your spouse will bring joy, and singles may find a suitable match. Lovebirds may decide to take their relationship to the next level.



Aquarius Jan 21 - Feb 19

A busy and productive day is ahead. Energy levels will be high, helping you accelerate projects and make quick decisions. Business partnerships may flourish, but investments in fixed assets should be avoided for now.



Cancer Jun 22 - July 23

Blessings from the Moon bring happiness and politeness in your interactions. You may make crucial business decisions with family support, and strong communication skills could help secure a big order. Take care of your throat, ears, and eyes.



Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 22

A happy and productive day awaits you. Losses may turn into profits, and appreciation from your boss may lead to a promotion or role change. Opponents and hidden enemies will be under control. Lovebirds may receive family support for marriage decisions.



Pisces Feb 20 - Mar 20

The Moon's blessings bring success at work. Promotions, transfers, or job changes may bring financial benefits. Relations with seniors will improve, and old health issues may be resolved. Be mindful of your diet to prevent stomach-related problems.



KIDZONE



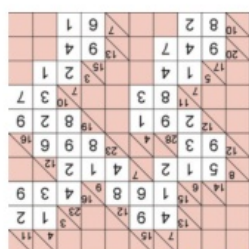
Valentin Marven, Euro School



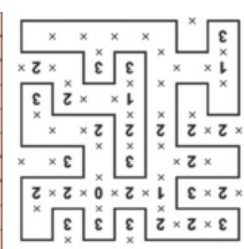
Ashwin T, 12 years, St John's High School

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror; No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor; Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011; Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

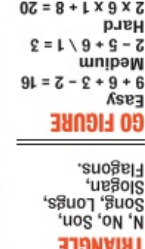
SOLUTIONS



KAKURO



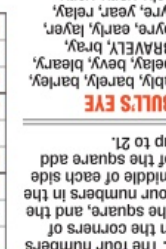
LOOP



ALPHA TRIANGLE



SUDOKU



MENSA PUZZLE



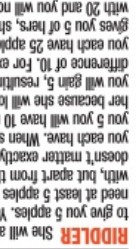
QUICK



STRIKE OUT



QUOTE UNQUOTE



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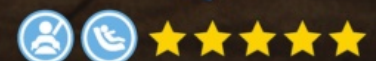


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